

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/632,443	SLESINSKI ET AL.
	Examiner Jeffrey Sharp	Art Unit 3677

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS**. This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to 2/01/05.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-15.
3. The drawings filed on 01 February 2005 and 01 August 2003 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

[1] An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with William Kolakowski on 09 March 2005.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 17 has been cancelled.

Replacement drawings and claim amendment has been entered.

Drawings

[2] In view of Applicant's replacement drawings and remarks submitted 01 February 2005, all previous objections to the drawings have been withdrawn.

Claim Objections

[3] In view of Applicant's amendment to claim 2 submitted 01 February 2005, the objection to claim 2 has been withdrawn.

Response to Arguments

[4] Applicant's arguments filed 01 February 2005, with respect to the rejections of claims 1-15 and 17 have been fully considered and are persuasive. All rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. 103(a) have been withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

[5] After further consideration of the art, and in view of Applicant's remarks and arguments filed 01 February 2005, independent claims 1 and 15 are allowed.

Accordingly, independent claims 2-14 are also allowed.

Reasons for Allowance

[6] The prior art of record fails to suggest or anticipate an assembly comprising a lock washer, thrust washer, nut, and/or a spindle, wherein the nut comprises a reduced *shoulder* portion protruding from one face; said shoulder providing an external diameter portion for an internal diameter portion of said lock washer. The shoulder on the nut allows free rotational movement of the lock washer placed over it. Although lock washers comprising tangs and tabs as anti-rotation means are commonly seen in the prior art (e.g., Giovannini US-1,731,337), the prior art fails to suggest a *shoulder* portion on a nut in a 'lock washer and spindle bearing assembly' (and/or 'combination thrust washer, lock washer and nut assembly') so as to allow infinitesimal rotational movement of the lock washer disposed thereon. The *shoulder* provides an axial clearance for the thickness of the lock washer, even when the nut is tightened.

Conclusion

[7] Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey Sharp whose telephone number is currently (703) 305-0426, but will change to (571) 272-7074 in April 2005 due to a move to the Alexandria, VA campus. The examiner can normally be reached 7:00 am - 5:30 pm Mon-Thurs.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J.J. Swann can be reached on (703) 306-4115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JAS



JJ Swann
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 3600